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**TAJIKISTAN**

## SUCCESS STORY

# Another step forward for land reform

### Roundtable on study tour to Australia helps advance land reform process



Photo: Kathrine Keim

*The USAID Land Reform and Market Development Project in Tajikistan organized a study tour to Australia in August 2007 for parliamentary and government officials. The roundtable was an opportunity for the participants of the trip to share with their colleagues the insights they gained from the presentations given by Australian land administrators and the discussions they had on Australia's system of land relations and property registration.*

*USAID's Land Reform and Market Development Project is a leader in promoting secure land tenure rights in Tajikistan by providing legal assistance to government officials and law drafters. The project also teaches farmers about their rights under the law and provides them with legal advice and counseling.*

On October 11, 2007, the USAID Land Reform and Market Development Project sponsored a roundtable to discuss "The Australian Experience Regarding Land Relations and Registration of Immovable Property." Chaired by Khursandmurod Mirzoev, legal advisor to the President, the event included representatives from the President's Office, the Majlisi Oli (Parliament), the Ministry of Economy and Trade, the National Bank, and the Agency on Land Management, Geodesy and Cartography.

The roundtable featured presentations from the participants of the recent USAID-sponsored study tour to Sydney and Canberra, Australia that was aimed at seeing a region where a secure land and property market has developed despite government ownership of all immovable property. This model is relevant for Tajikistan, where the Constitution provides that the State retains ownership of all land.

The study tour demonstrated the application of a system of land relations currently being contemplated for Tajikistan and showed that buying, selling and mortgaging of land use rights need not violate state ownership of land. With amendments to the Land Code and a draft law on property registration now before the Parliament, the roundtable provided a timely opportunity for an exchange of views on important aspects of Tajikistan's land reform process.

The roundtable concluded that the Australian experience will have a positive impact on the Tajik legislation now being considered. They also noted, however, that consideration should be given to the unique situation of Tajikistan, which does not have as much arable land as Australia.

The Land Reform and Market Development Project is one of the many assistance projects implemented in Tajikistan by USAID on behalf of the American people. Since 1993 more than \$270 million in assistance programs has been provided to support economic growth, democratic institutions, health care, and education systems of Tajikistan.